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Partners in Preservation

A VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER



VOLUNTEER

Issue #1: Spring 1999

What's New: The Newsletter

I hope you like the look and feel of your new newsletter. In response to requests from volunteers and staff, the Volunteer Co-ordinating Committee for Natural Resources Service has produced Issue #1 of "Partners in Preservation." Our intent is to provide you with an informative, fun newsletter that showcases volunteers, staff, projects and feature articles of interest to you. We hope to produce this newsletter at least twice a year to keep you informed on what's happening and provide a forum for you, the staff and volunteers, to communicate with each other as well. This is your newsletter, its success will depend upon your participation.

You can help us meet your communication needs by:

- ◆ completing the Readers Survey on the back page
- ◆ providing your verbal feedback to any member of the Volunteer Co-ordinating Committee
- ◆ submitting a short article for future publication or submitting a letter to the Editor.

Enjoy! We look forward to hearing from you and to the continued evolution of this newsletter.

A special thanks to all those who contributed to this newsletter and to its new look. ◆

Fred Moffatt
Director, Recreation and Protected Areas Division



**Volunteers at Milk River
Natural Area**

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"CHANGES AND CHALLENGES IN RECREATION AND PROTECTED AREAS" 1998 Conference Report

Pigeon Lake, set in the great outdoors, seemed an appropriate location for the 220 participants of the 1998 Natural Resources Service Volunteer Conference. It was the first joint Volunteer Host/Protected Areas Steward conference ever held. This change was one of many discussed during the weekend conference, which was entitled "Changes and Challenges in Recreation and Protected Areas."

To accommodate the diverse interests of the participants, three venues were used: Lakedell Hall, Alberta 4-H Centre and Pigeon Lake Provincial Park. Highlights of the conference included 25 training sessions, 9 early morning walks and four field trips. When participants were not attending the 6:00 a.m. bird and plant identification walks, the panel discussions or the training sessions that lasted until 5:30 p.m., they could be found at social events such as the Friday evening "Meet & Mingle Social and Share Fair", the Saturday Volunteer Recognition Luncheon and the Saturday evening Volunteer Appreciation Banquet.

The organizing committee would like to thank all conference participants for their involvement and we hope to see you at a future conference of this scale, tentatively scheduled for the "Year of the Volunteer" in 2001. ♦



Early Morning Birdwalk



**Don Johnston Receiving His
Awards for Outstanding
Contributions**



Sunday Morning Breakfast

More Conference Comments

"Exhibits were great! Excellent! A great opportunity for Stewards & Hosts to mingle & get to know what each other do. The informal atmosphere set the tone for the conference."

"Look forward each year to the conference weekend. To renew friendships & share ideas. Learning new things is invaluable. Makes one feel an important part of the whole."

"These conferences get better each year, but I don't think it could get better than this year. It was very well organized. Good Job!!"

"Stewards & Hosts are similar in many ways, but as well different. Integrating them to the current level was a good idea, but further combining would be detrimental, though perhaps allowing stewards or hosts to attend each other's programs as their interests determined, would be a good improvement."

"Have combined sessions for Stewards & Hosts - wildlife identification - conducting nature walks, etc."

"Enjoyable. Met some people with a passion for their Natural Areas".

Friendly Reminder to All Stewards, Hosts and other NRS Volunteers

The 4th Annual Natural Resources Service (NRS) Recognition Weekend

May 14, 15 & 16, 1999

Come and join us in a casual atmosphere!

Where: Pigeon Lake Provincial Park: Group Area A & C
(Free camping will be available or hotel accommodations at a special rate have been arranged with the Cedar Crest in Mulhurst)

Tentative Program

Friday P.M.	Registration "Meet and Greet" Social Department Greetings
Saturday	Registration Sessions* Volunteer Recognition
Sunday A.M.	Pancake Breakfast Volunteer Forum

RSVP to Doug Pilkington by May 5th
To call toll free dial 310-0000 then (780) 361-1250

* The inaugural meeting of the Stewards of Alberta's Protected Areas Association (SAPAA) will also be held on Saturday from 1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Protected Areas Volunteer Steward 10th Anniversary Recognition Award Honors Dorothy Dickson



Dorothy Dickson, the 1998 recipient of the Protected Areas Volunteer Steward Program's 10th Anniversary Recognition Award, was honored at the May Volunteer Conference. She was presented with the program's most prestigious award, a beautiful framed buffalo print titled "Sacred and Sacrificed."

For the past three decades, Dorothy has provided leadership in protecting Alberta's natural diversity and has been instrumental in protecting areas of regional and international significance. Dorothy has represented the Red Deer River Naturalists as a volunteer steward for the Innisfail Natural Area since 1989. She has worked for years on behalf of the Red Deer River Naturalists to protect the Rumsey block, one of the world's largest remaining intact blocks of aspen parkland and northern fescue grassland. Her efforts contributed to the establishment of the Rumsey Ecological Reserve and Rumsey Natural Area.

Dorothy is a tireless worker and is deeply admired and respected by naturalists and environmentalists throughout Canada. Her decades-long efforts have inspired teachers, youth, naturalists and Canadians to learn about nature and work toward its protection. A small part of the citation taken from The Loran L Goulden Award which she received in 1997 from the Federation of Alberta's Naturalists, says it all:

"Her willingness to challenge us all to think and act in the cause of nature is truly an inspiration".

The 10th Anniversary Award

The 10th Anniversary Volunteer Steward Program award was first presented in 1997 by the Honorable Ty Lund, Minister of Environmental Protection, to the Volunteer Stewards of Alberta's Parks and Protected Areas in celebration of the program's 10th anniversary. The print is presented to a steward who has shown dedication, leadership and commitment to Alberta's protected areas. Each year this print is passed on to a new recipient in recognition of outstanding contributions made by volunteer stewards. ♦

Volunteer Hosts Receive 10,000 Hour Award Irene & Doug Dahl

What did Mrs. Tilden Rent-A-Car and Mr. Manager of Air Traffic Controllers do when they retired? They became volunteers with the former Alberta Parks Service, camphosting at Big Knife, Zeiner, and Pigeon Lake Provincial Parks. Thirteen years later, they are still assisting staff at the group of parks in the Pigeon Lake area.

Congratulations and a real big thanks from all of us in Natural Resources Service. ♦



Your Volunteer Co-ordinating Committee

Successful volunteer programs require dedicated, enthusiastic staff and a whole lot of co-ordination to provide both volunteers and staff with the training, materials, supplies and information that they need. This important role is the primary responsibility of the Volunteer Co-ordinating Committee, comprised of representatives from each region and the Recreation and Protected Areas Division (RPAD).

Chairperson:

Doug Pilkington, Parkland Region, (780) 586-2645

Co-Chair:

Vacant RPAD

Divisional Volunteer Co-ordinator:

Sandra Myers RPAD (780) 427-5209

Regional Representatives:

Sid Allen	Northeast Boreal Region	(780) 675-2419
John Doll	Northwest Boreal Region	(780) 849-7100
Dave Vetra	Northern East Slopes Region	(780) 963-6131
Rob Hugill	Bow Region	(403) 378-4342
Keith Bocking	Prairie Region	(403) 893-3777

Toll-Free-RITE Direct:

To call any Alberta Government agency toll-free from anywhere in the province, dial 310-0000, then the number, or hold the line for operator assistance. ♦

1998 Protected Areas Volunteer Steward Recognition Awards

Since its inception in September 1987, the Protected Areas Volunteer Steward Program has seen more than a few changes. Together we faced these changes and challenges and thrived, making the program stronger than ever. Our numbers are still increasing, particularly last year, thanks to volunteer steward Doug Taylor, who was instrumental in spreading the word about the program. Thirty eight new stewards in three months, the largest increase we have ever had in that similar time period. 237 individual volunteer stewards and 67 major organizations and societies (many of them with memberships in the hundreds, if not thousands) monitor 167 natural areas. Through your dedication, stewards have contributed over 160,000 hours to Alberta's protected areas.

Many of these stewards were honored at the "Changes and Challenges" Volunteer Conference held in May, 1998. The 1998 award recipients were:

Outstanding Achievement Awards

"Outstanding Achievement" awards are presented to people who exemplify the role of stewards and go "above and beyond" the call of duty as volunteers. The recipients were:

- ♦ **Don Johnston** (North Ram Wilderness Society): North Ram /Nice Creek Candidate Natural Area
- ♦ **Louisa Rich**: Jackpines Natural Area
- ♦ **Alison Dinwoodie** (Alpine Club of Canada-Edmonton): Cardinal Divide Natural Area

**10th Anniversary Volunteer Steward Award -
1998 Recipient
Dorothy Dickson -Innisfail Natural Area
(see page 4)**

Continued on next page . . .

10 Year Awards - Volunteer Steward Vests

Desmond Allen	Robert Gouin	Gary Lukawesky	Ivan Shukster
Elmar Auguart	Reginald Gray	Kent Lukinuk	Patricia Stansfield
Kathie Blackman	David Hanam	Mark Lund	Gordon Trost
Brian Breneman	Susan Harrison	Howard MacPherson	Clarence Truckey
Connie Bresnahan	Doris Hopkins	Mike McNaughton	Richard Walker
Bill Bresnahan	Eric Hopkins	Don Morden	Anne Weerstra
Bill Brown	Don Johnston	Andrew Murphy	Bryne Weerstra
Doris Cairns	Jon Jorgenson	Ken O'Brien	Colin Wenger
Earl Cairns	Rose Keiller	Maxine O'Riordan	Derry White
Susan Crump	Gordon Kerr	Robert Peel	Ora White
David Dolph	Doug Kielau	Patrick Porter	Daryl Wig
Jean Funk	Cecil Knuttila	Fred Schutz	Ken Yackimec

Alberta Native Plant Council, Alberta Wilderness Association, Beaverhill Bird Observatory, Big Hill Blazers Junior Forest Wardens, Caslan & District Development Association, County of Strathcona, Cooking Lake Moraine Conservation Association, Eagles Junior Forest Wardens, Fort Saskatchewan Naturalist Society, J.J. Collett Foundation, Rainbow Equitation Society, Red Deer River Naturalists, Riverlot 56 Natural Area Society, Stettler Junior Forest Wardens, Stony Plain Fish & Game Association, Wagner Natural Area Society, Upper Bow Valley Fish & Game Association

5 Year Awards - Volunteer Steward Sweatshirts

Brian Barr	Bob Gerlock	Locklin McDonald	Trevor Russ
Ron Bjorge	Allan Haskin	Dave McIntosh	Ken Sanderson
Linda Bjorge	Arlene Haskin	Ivy Mewha	Micheal Sherman
Michael Bjorge	Stuart Heard	Don Mewha	Mark Sherrington
Roy Bjorge	Linda Kershaw	Gertie Meyer	Jean Sproule
Gordon Dodd	Bob Loewen	Elena Napora	Nonie Sundstrom
Curtis Evans	Doreen Loewen	Kate Reeves	Hubert Taube
Sonja Evans	John Lovie	Denise Riopel	Brent Toma
Robert Faulds	Chel Macdonald	Ingrid Russ	Bruce Wilson

Alberta Native Plant Council, Alberta Off Highway Vehicle Association, Alpine Club of Canada, Battle Lake Natural Area Preservation Society, First Didsbury Scouts, Fort McMurray Field Naturalists, Hastings Lake Hyper Hikers Junior Forest Wardens, Pembina River Fish & Game Association, Red Deer River Naturalists, Redwater Junior Forest Wardens, Stony Plain Fish & Game Association, Youth & Volunteer Centre

2 Year Awards - Volunteer Steward T-Shirts

Jacqueline Andriet	Abram Neustater	Teresa Seidel	Juanita Strebchuk
Donn Cline	Louisa Rich	Curtis Seigfried	Laurence Strebchuk
Shelia Cline	Beverly Roberston	Laura Siegfried	John Vrolijk
Gerry Haekel	Ken Sanderson	Lucas Siegfried	Ken Wacowich
William Marx	Rick Scott	Janneke Van Der Schoot	David Wood
Robin McDonald	Fritz Seidel	Pieter Van Der Schoot	Debbie Wood
Wayne Miller	Hanne Seidel	Pieter J. Van Der Schoot	

Alberta Off Highway Vehicle Association, Battle Lake Natural Area Preservation Society, Castle Crown Wilderness Coalition, Clifford E. Lee Nature Sanctuary Management Committee, Debolt & District Pioneer Museum Society, Environmental Campus Organization, Environmental Conservation Science Students Association, Grassland Naturalists, Newbrook Range Riders Association, North Ram Wilderness Society, Royal Canadian Army Cadets(2716) Airborne, Tawatinaw Field Naturalists

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL PROTECTED AREAS VOLUNTEER STEWARDS.
YOU DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Calgary's Peregrines Stranger Than Fiction!

Dr. Gordon Court
Provincial Wildlife Status Assessment Specialist
Fisheries and Wildlife Management
Alberta Environmental Protection
Gord.court@gov.ab.ca

As many of you may remember, I presented a lecture on the "Return of the Peregrine Falcon" at your NRS Volunteers Conference last May. I was especially keen to talk at the conference because many of the volunteers in attendance are ideally situated to find and report peregrine nests as this species recovers in the province in the next few years. In fact, many of the peregrine sightings that we receive each year come from volunteers. Please give me a call if you bump into a peregrine pair during your travels or if you would like a stack of the peregrine observation cards!

Below is a particularly bizarre story about the peregrines nesting in downtown Calgary that seemed to tickle everyone's fancy at the conference.

In recent years, birders in North America have enjoyed the spectacular population recovery of peregrine falcons. This resurgence has not only involved peregrines returning to wild nest cliffs, many pairs have set up in large urban centres. More than sixty cities throughout the continent now boast the presence of at least one peregrine pair. Since 1980, biologists with Alberta Environmental Protection have banded urban peregrines, three pairs in Calgary and four pairs in Edmonton. Therefore, it takes something really different to impress the biologists as unusual in the peregrine world these days. Recently, I was fortunate to accompany biologists from Alberta Environmental Protection on a trip to a nest on a skyscraper in downtown Calgary, where they did encounter something very bizarre.

Upon stepping out onto the nest ledge, the adult male peregrine immediately welcomed us with an all-out assault. Curiously, his mate simply muttered a few protesting vocalisations and resumed brooding - the bird appeared completely tame! Her trusting nature was a bonus to the biologists, for it would be relatively easy to identify the number on her leg band from such close range. When the female stood up, the men were shocked to note that several wraps of black electrical tape covered her identification band! When would any-



one have had the chance to cover the band with tape? Who would do such a thing?

Curiosity was too much for the biologists. Taking advantage of her passive nature, they simply lifted the female off the nest and that's when things got really strange. Removing the tape from the band, the men discovered that the female was the same bird that had nested in Calgary the previous year. Inside the covering, they were amazed to find a note, waterproofed in a condom wrapper, that had been written by someone on board a ship! Although badly weathered, the message was clear enough to allow contact with the shipping company to obtain more details.

After a few months of correspondence, the mystery was solved. A Filipino sailor serving as an officer on a German merchant ship answered the inquiries. Apparently, the previous autumn, his ship had been sailing from Tampico to Coatzacoalcas, Mexico when about 100 miles out to sea, they encountered high winds and very rough seas. As the sailors were securing the vessel during the ensuing hurricane, they noticed a peregrine falcon flying around the ship, trying to take refuge aboard. A short time later, the belle of downtown Calgary landed, apparently exhausted, on the rooftop port wing of the bridge. During the height of the storm, the sailors easily approached the bird, captured her, and held her captive until the storm abated. While feeding her, the crew noted the leg bands stamped with U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Washington, D.C. They decided to add their own information in the form of a note, taped to the band. After her winter in Central America, the falcon returned to the concrete walls of downtown Calgary, to become one of the most charismatic 'carrier pigeons' in history.

Continued on Page 15 . . .

Environmental Education Volunteers in Cypress Hills

**by Simone Forget
Volunteer Project Coordinator
CHIEPEEP**

Three university students have volunteered to carry out the Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park Environmental Education Project (CHIEPEEP). Cypress Hills is a unique protected area that provides an excellent venue for educating school children about the natural environment and our place in it.

The CHIEPEEP project has three phases. In phase one, the research team visits fourteen environmental education sites in the province, looking for ideas suitable for use at Cypress Hills. Phase two consists of surveying science teachers in the Medicine Hat area for their ideas on environmental education. In the final stage, the research team will combine the information from the first two phases, and develop three curriculum-based environmental education field studies. These programs are expected to be piloted in the spring of 1999.

Simone Forget, a former Medicine Hat school teacher, is the project coordinator. As a part of her Master's degree requirement, she is volunteering eight months of her time to develop an environmental education program for Cypress Hills. Simone has worked as a seasonal park interpreter for three seasons, and has six years of classroom teaching experience.

Corey Kauffman, a seasonal park ranger at Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park has also come on board. The project will be applied to his University of Lethbridge degree. Corey was not the only one intrigued by the project. Suzanne Ogilvie-King, a student in the Certificate for Ecological Education program at the University of Saskatchewan is impressed with Simone's environmental education philosophy, and rounds out the project team.

"It is a win-win-win situation," says Keith Bocking, regional Visitors Service Officer. "Alberta Environmental Protection gets three quality field studies that can be modified for use in other provincial parks, and the research team gains field experience that they can apply to their university studies. I think the ones that will gain the most will be the school kids and the teachers who participate in the program."

When asked what motivates her as she continues the project, Simone replied, "Well, partly, it is to fulfill the requirements of my Masters degree, but it is much more than that, it is my way of giving back. I spent a lot of time as a child in awe of the beauty and magic of the Cypress Hills. I would like to share what I know with as many children and adults as I can."

For more information about the project, Simone can be reached at forgsm@uleth.ca. ♦



In 1859, Captain John Palliser described the Cypress Hills as "an oasis in the desert." The hills today are an island of mixed forest and fescue grassland surrounded by short grass prairie and ranchland protected in Alberta and Saskatchewan as Canada's only Interprovincial Park.

1999 VOLUNTEER HOST OPPORTUNITIES

Have some extra time on your hands? Want to spend a few weeks volunteering in one of the most beautiful spots in the world - an Alberta Provincial Park? Then become a Volunteer Host. Hosts give approximately three to four hours a day, five days per week (must include Saturday & Sunday) helping their fellow campers. You give out information about the park and surrounding area (towns, grocery stores, best golf courses, and so on). Duties vary slightly from park to park - so if you're interested, give us a call:

Name of Park/Recreation Area	Contact	Telephone	Nearest Town/City
Hilliard's Bay Provincial Park	Karen Hayduk	780 751 3789	Grouard
Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park	John Doll	780 849 7100	Slave Lake
Winagami Lake Provincial Park	Christine Scotland	780 523 2427	Kathleen
Queen Elizabeth Provincial Park	Leslie Sullivan	780 624 6405	Grimshaw
Notikewin Provincial Park	Leslie Sullivan	780 624 6405	Manning
Saskatoon Island Provincial Park	Scott Blake	780 766 2636	Grande Prairie
Moonshine Lake Provincial Park	Scott Blake	780 766 2636	Spirit River
Two Lakes Provincial Recreation Area	Grant Santo	780 864 2266	Grande Prairie
Dunvegan Provincial Park	Leslie Sullivan	780 624 6405	Fairview
Cross Lake Provincial Park	Sidney Allen	780 675 2419	Jarvie
Gregoire Lake Provincial Park	Dennis Spackman	780 743 7440	Fort McMurray
Long Lake Provincial Park	Nancy Keith-Amoro	780 576 3960	Boyle
Whitney Lakes Provincial Park	Kerry Hope	780 943 3761	Elk Point
Sir Winston Churchill Provincial Park	Phil Cohen	780-623-5434	Lac La Biche
Cypress Hills Provincial Park	Paul Avery	403 893 3777	Medicine Hat
Miquelon Provincial Park	Doug Gamble	780 672 7274	New Sarepta
Peaceful Valley Provincial Recreation Area	Doug Pilkington	780 586 2645	Pigeon Lake
Buck Lake Provincial Recreation Area	Doug Pilkington	780 586 2645	Buck Lake Village
Red Lodge Provincial Park	Ray Gibson	403 340 7683	Bowden
Gleniffer Provincial Recreation Area	Ray Gibson	403 340 7683	Innisfail
Big Knife Provincial Park	Gerry Bennett	403 748 3939	Forestburg
Rochon Sands Provincial Park	Gerry Bennett	403 748 3939	Rochon Sands
Crimson Lake Provincial Park and West Country Provincial Recreation Areas	Myles Jensen	403 845 8245	Rocky Mountain House
William A. Switzer Provincial Park	Jeanette Brooks	780 865 5600	Hinton
Pierre Grey's Lake Provincial Recreation Area	Jeanette Brooks	780 865 5600	Hinton
Rock Lake Provincial Recreation Area	Jeanette Brooks	780 865 5600	Hinton
Thunder Lake Provincial Park	Ken Kroetsch	780 674 6454	Barrhead

<http://www.gov.ab.ca/env/parks/voluntee/host99.html>

Hop Into Alberta's Amphibian Monitoring Program!

by Lisa Takats
Non -Game Biologist
Alberta Conservation Association

The Alberta Amphibian Monitoring Program was initiated to obtain information on long-term population trends and the current distribution of amphibians in Alberta. Concern has been expressed over declines in many species of amphibians around the world. Here in Alberta, the endangered northern leopard frog (*Rana pipiens*) is absent from much of its former range, and the remaining populations are greatly reduced. There are two components to the program: 1) volunteer data collection, and 2) intensive site-based monitoring (RANA, Researching Amphibian Numbers in Alberta).

The program has been quite successful with 265 individual amphibian reports from 17 volunteers between 1992 and 1994. In 1997, 107 volunteers from all over the province submitted information to the program; and in 1998 over 140 volunteers sent in over 750 records. Ten species of amphibians were recorded including: tiger salamander (*Ambystoma tigrinum*), long-toed salamander (*Ambystoma macrodactylum*), plains spadefoot (*Scaphiopus bombifrons*), boreal (western) toad (*Bufo boreas*), great plains toad (*Bufo cognatus*), Canadian toad (*Bufo hemiophrys*), boreal chorus frog (*Pseudacris triseriata*), spotted frog (*Rana pretiosa*), wood frog (*Rana sylvatica*) and northern leopard frog. Although a large part of the province has been sampled, there are still many areas that need to be surveyed.

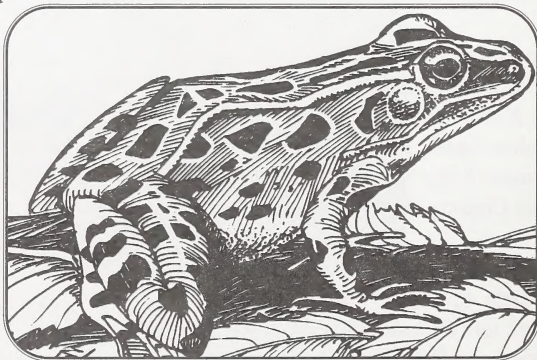
Why participate in the monitoring program? The data you collect is vital to developing a better understanding of the numbers, trends, and distribution of amphibian populations in Alberta. Also, being a volunteer participant is a great way to enjoy the outdoors, get in touch with nature and participate in an activity that's fun for the entire family. How can you get involved? It's simple:

1. Contact us for a free monitoring manual containing information on the identification, ecology and natural history of Alberta's amphibians. Included with the manual are a cassette tape of amphibian calls, and a copy of our "Croaks and Trills" newsletter.
2. Read the manual and listen to the cassette tape to familiarize yourself with Alberta's amphibians.
3. Choose a site or sites to survey.
4. Go out and listen for frogs and toads, walk the study site (optional), and record evidence of amphibians, such as egg masses, tadpoles and/or adults.
5. Fill out the data sheets provided at the back of the manual, and send them to us.

If you would like more information and/or would like to participate in the amphibian monitoring program contact Lisa Takats at (780) 427-1249. To call toll free, call 310-0000 and ask for the above number, or write:

The Alberta Amphibian Monitoring Program,
Alberta Conservation Association / Natural
Resources Service – Fish and Wildlife,
7th Floor, O.S. Longman Building, 6909-116
Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 4P2.

Website: <http://www.gov.ab.ca/env/fw/amphib/index.html> ♦



Working Together in Peaceful Valley

Robert Wark and Kay Wark, a brother and sister committed to improving quality of life for the elderly, disabled and terminally ill, had a dream. Their dream began to take shape in 1984, when they encountered a group of seniors in wheelchairs who were visiting Pigeon Lake, in less-than-ideal conditions. This experience gave birth to an idea: they would do whatever they could to provide disadvantaged groups with the opportunity to experience the beauty of nature in a place that accommodated their special needs. The Warks' land, overlooking the Battle River, was an ideal location.

The Warks had three goals: care of the elderly; conservation of the resource; and creation of a partnership between the public and private sectors. Robert Wark and Kay Wark made their dream come true in August, 1991, when they signed an agreement with Alberta Parks and the Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife (ASRPW) Foundation. They donated their land and made a substantial financial contribution to the Foundation, making the Peaceful Valley project a reality!

Today, Peaceful Valley is a 4.7 hectares Provincial Recreation Area overlooking the deep Battle River Valley, about one hundred kilometers southwest of Edmonton. A third of the recreation area is a rolling meadow with spectacular views of the river valley. The other two thirds consists of a healthy grove of poplar, birch and spruce, together with many native shrubs and woodland flowers. The area is transversed by two spring-fed creeks that form a pond, a marsh, and a waterfall.

Peaceful Valley has been open for three seasons. The partners, including Kay Wark, Robert Wark, the Friends of Peaceful Valley, the Alberta Sports, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation, the Natural Resources Service of Alberta Environmental Protection, together with volunteers, make it all happen. Use is increasing yearly. During the 1998 summer season the area was fully booked. Volunteers live on site in their RVs and host visitors every day. The lodge accommodates up to forty wheelchairs, has kitchen facilities and is surrounded by 1.5 km of wheelchair trails. A golf cart, donated by the International Order of Foresters (Edmonton), transports people with limited mobility so that they too can enjoy the area.

Robert Wark and Kay Wark had a vision, to improve the QUALITY OF LIFE for the people of Alberta. They made their dream come true and in 1997, the Peaceful Valley Project was awarded the LAUREL AWARD, in recognition of Innovation and Creativity by a non-profit group.

As Ranger in Charge of the site, I cannot operate without the support of the volunteers who so generously donate their time to ensure that the DREAM continues. For further information regarding volunteer opportunities in this area, call:

Doug Pilkington, Ranger in Charge, at
(780) 361-1250, Pigeon Lake Provincial
Park ♦



Open House Celebrates Trail Restoration

Jean Funk
Sherwood Park Natural Area Steward

To celebrate restoration of the Sherwood Park Natural Area hiking trail, Volunteer Stewards and the Strathcona Naturalists led a guided tour of the area on Saturday, November 14, 1998 from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Before the tour, a short program was held to thank our community partners, without whom the work would not have been possible.

The three kilometer trail, which had become overgrown, was restored to its original condition with the assistance of community sponsorships. Enbridge, formerly Interprovincial Pipe Line Ltd., provided \$5,000 in funding through their Community-Based Environmental Initiative Program. Colchester and District Agricultural Society, Petro-Canada, the Strathcona Naturalists, Strathcona County, Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development (AFRD) and Alberta Environmental Protection provided additional support. Scott's Bobcat Services Ltd. was awarded the contract to upgrade the trail. This local family-owned business worked meticulously to ensure a quality walking trail for the community.

The Sherwood Park Natural Area is located one kilometer south of Township Road 522 on Range Road 231 in Strathcona County. ♦

Lac La Biche's Extraordinary Volunteer

Glenda Malofe

Katherine Francis Elizabeth Polzin, known to all of us as Katie and her aide Lisa Bayduza have been volunteering for Natural Resources Service, every Tuesday and Thursday morning since July 1998. Katie was disabled after an unfortunate accident, but that doesn't stop her. She is an inspiration to us all. Not only does she help out in the office, she is active in the community as well. Our volunteer program has provided Katie the opportunity to perform valuable work for the Department. Katie always has a smile and a friendly greeting. Things wouldn't be the same without her. ♦

Enbridge Presents Cheque to Sherwood Park Volunteers



From left to right:

Reg Grey (Volunteer Steward), Darrell Roberts (Enbridge), Mayor Vern Hartwell, Wayne Holland (AFRD Project Manager)



Katie Polzin

Wabamun Lake and TransAlta Celebrate Parks Day '98

Volunteers Making Parks Day Happen!



Each year in Canada, the 3rd Saturday in July is Parks Day, a day celebrated so that Canadians can "...enjoy parks and reflect on the beauty of our natural surroundings." Thousands of Canadians take part in Parks Day festivities throughout our country.

In 1998, TransAlta helped make Parks Day a resounding success at Wabamun Lake Provincial Park. For the party, TransAlta provided a free hot dog lunch, ably prepared by Master Barbecue Chef Fred Lindsay. Fred flipped 36 dozen hot dogs during the event. "The weather was great, the day was a blast, and a good time was had by all," says Fred. Soft drinks were generously provided by Coca Cola.

On hand to help out Park Ranger staff were volunteer hosts, TransAlta staff, Beach Recreational Services and the families of Park staff, all of whom volunteered their time to make the day a lot of fun for everyone.

Parks Day visitors could take part in face painting and tattooing (the temporary kind of course). There were also balloons and sidewalk art activities. For the more energetic, there was beach volleyball, tug-of-war, paddle boat and three-legged races and snowshoe competitions on the beach. We also noticed some intriguing sand creations on the beach, courtesy of some of our more imaginative visitors. For those interested in learning more about the plants and animals that make their home here, a Park Ranger led a hike through the Park. ♦

Child's Play at Wabamun

Heart-felt thanks go out to the 20 TransAlta employees and their families who spent a Saturday last summer at Wabamun Lake Provincial Park, creating a playground for disabled children. TransAlta purchased the playground equipment, which was installed in the Park's day use area. The volunteers built the structure from the ground up, digging holes for the anchor pieces, assembling the equipment and hoisting it into place, tightening every bolt, and building a sand border. The new playground will provide many hours of enjoyment for grateful young Park visitors. ♦



Is the American Redstart Rare? - Not at the Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory

Frank Fraser,
Visitor Services Officer,
Lesser Slave Lake
Provincial Park

Global warming, destruction of tropical wintering grounds, urban sprawl, habitat fragmentation and other environmental changes can affect the long-term survival of boreal forest migrant birds. It is predicted that fragmentation of the boreal forest is greatly affecting the habitat of the American Redstart. Many well known bird survey programs, such as the Christmas Bird Count and the Breeding Bird Survey, do not adequately track population changes in boreal forest birds. That is why landbird monitoring stations in the boreal forest are so important. A number of recent analyses based on data from U.S. and eastern Canada monitoring programs indicate widespread and severe declines in some boreal nesting migrants.

The 26 most abundant species of warblers in eastern and central North America have been ranked by overall estimates of population change, with the most extreme declines ranking highest. The American Redstart is among the top six species on the list. The Lesser Slave Lake Bird Observatory's (LSLBO) number one banded species is the American Redstart. The LSLBO monitors more migrant and breeding pairs of American Redstarts than any other research site in Canada.

The LSLBO is Canada's northernmost migration monitoring station. The Observatory is 250 km north of Edmonton, on the eastern shores of Lesser Slave Lake, in Lesser Slave Lake Provincial Park. It is funded by a non-profit society established in 1994, and operated by dedicated volunteers. The Observatory is operated through a partnership between the not-for-profit sector, volunteers, the ornithological community, Alberta Environmental Protection, the forest industry, and the tourism industry.

The main method of monitoring landbirds at the LSLBO is constant effort mistnetting. A series of fine nylon mesh mist nets are placed in willow and alder thickets by Lesser Slave Lake. From 1994 to 1998, 2,294 American Redstarts were banded. 1999 marks the sixth year of the study. This year, a five year technical report will be compiled. It will provide critical information about presence/absence, life expectancy, survivorship and productivity, and migration routes/patterns of boreal forest bird species. For example, a Least Flycatcher was banded in Omaha, Nebraska, on May 25, 1998 and recaptured at the LSLBO on June 5, 1998. Up to this point, researchers had no idea that migrant songbirds travelling through Nebraska came to this area of the boreal forest. The flycatcher covered a distance of 2,100 kilometers in twelve or less days, which means it flies at least 175 km per day. This benchmark data allows land managers to design and implement better management practices.

Continued on next page . . .



Continued from page 14 (Is the American Redstart Rare?)

The LSLBO relies on volunteer assistance. The following volunteer opportunities are available:

Long-term Volunteer Field Biologists

- eligible for free accommodation and an expense allowance.

Summer Assistants

- eligible for an expense account.

Short-term Volunteers

- required to pay a modest fee of \$15.00 per day for LSLBO training and services.

If you have a passion for birds, wilderness, and wish to see some of the most sought after bird species in North America, we'd like to hear from you.

Contact the Lesser Slave Bird Observatory by telephone: (780) 849-7349;

email: [HYPERLINK mailto:lsbo@telusplanet.net](mailto:HYPERLINKmailto:lsbo@telusplanet.net);

mail: LSLBO,
POB 1076,
Slave Lake, AB
T0G 2A0. ♦

Songbird Festival

Catch the 5th Annual LSLBO Songbird Festival, June 5 & 6, 1999. The guest speaker is Brian Keating from the Calgary Zoo, who will present a multimedia talk, "Islands in Time". about island biogeography and the unique, sometimes bizarre, endemic birds of islands such as Hawaii, Madagascar and the Galapagos Islands.

Continued from page 7 (Calgary Peregrines - Stranger Than Fiction!)

Consistent with other parts of North America, over one hundred peregrine pairs nested in Alberta prior to the 1950s. The population plummeted in the 1950s and 1960s as a result of DDT pollution. Only one pair remained in the province in 1973.

World-wide declines in DDT pollutant levels together with a captive breeding and release program for peregrines in Canada, has resulted in a population recovery in Canada and the U.S. Alberta now has between 40 and 50 pairs of birds breeding in the province.

The next year should see the anatum peregrine falcon* being taken off the list of Endangered Animals in the U.S. Canada will probably downlist the bird in April, 1999. ♦

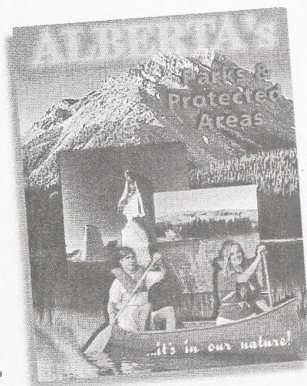
*Editor's Note: *Falco peregrinus anatum* is the subspecies of peregrine falcon that breeds in Alberta.

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Alberta
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Return to:
Volunteer Coordinator
Recreation and Protected Areas
2nd floor, Oxbridge Place
9820 - 106 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T5K 2J6

Partners In Preservation: Readers Survey

Volunteers and Staff....This is your newsletter! To make it meaningful to you we need your input. Please take the time to complete the survey below. The information will be used to help us determine the look and content of future editions.

1. In your opinion, what are the most important goals for "Partners in Preservation"? Please rank your top three choices (1, 2 & 3) from the categories below:

- ☐ Provide a forum for communication between volunteers, staff and management
- ☐ To acknowledge volunteers and their contributions to Natural Resources Service (NRS)
- ☐ To motivate current volunteers to stay involved
- ☐ To provide information that enables volunteers to learn more about their duties or voluntarism within NRS
- ☐ To communicate about new volunteer opportunities and upcoming events
- ☐ To communicate information on management and policy decisions that affect volunteers
- ☐ Other, please specify

2. What information is of most interest or use to you? Please rank your top three choices (1, 2, & 3) from the categories below:

- ☐ Volunteer Profiles
- ☐ Staff Profiles
- ☐ Ads for upcoming events and opportunities
- ☐ Volunteer recognition and awards
- ☐ Feature articles on volunteer projects
- ☐ Natural History Notes
- ☐ Steward Site Profiles
- ☐ Publications and Resources
- ☐ Articles about past events and conferences
- ☐ Letters to the editor
- ☐ Other, please specify

3. What other suggestions do you have to make this newsletter more interesting and useful to you?

4. Would you be willing to assist with production of the newsletter by:

- ☐ Submitting articles
- ☐ Soliciting and assembling articles from your organization, Service or region

Assisting with:

- ☐ Editing
- ☐ Mail outs
- ☐ Photography
- ☐ Drawings or graphics

If you'd like to help out, please include the following information:

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

NOTE: Personal information is collected under authority of the Parks Act and will be used only for the purpose stated.

Please return this survey to:

Sandra Myers
Divisional Volunteer Co-ordinator
Recreation and Protected Areas
2nd Floor, Oxbridge Place
9820-106 St
Edmonton, AB T5K 2J6

Future Editions of Partners in Preservation:

Letters to the Editor and articles can be mailed to Sandra Myers at the above address.



